XVII. GARDEN OF GRACE - PROGRAM & GUIDELINES

a) Definition – Grace Presbyterian Church's Garden of Grace is a scatter garden which is a designated outdoor area in which human cremains (cremated remains) may be distributed.

b) Purpose – to provide an inspiring location for the distribution of human cremains of those eligible to use this service. We, as a church, are to be good stewards of our resources, including available land space, a scatter garden fulfills this purpose.

c) Location – the location is at the eastern end of the church building, between the building and the gazebo. This area has been consecrated by the pastor in a dedication service. Human cremains are not allowed to remain in any kind of urn or other container but must be spread about within the designated area. At the time of placement of ashes or holding a memorial service, flowers (real or artificial) and any other remembrance items may be placed by the family. All such items shall be removed by the family within twenty-four (24) hours following the scattering of ashes or conclusion of the memorial service. Any items remaining after this twenty-four (24) period will be removed by the Building and Grounds Committee.

d) Eligibility – The Garden of Grace is available for use by current and former members of the church, their families, and current and former pastors of the church. The session shall have the authority to approve requests from other individuals, including former or current employees of the church, who desire to use the Garden of Grace.

e) Fees – there is a fee of $1000.00 for each person's cremains using the Garden of Grace. **Option I:** the full fee is paid at execution of contract, or **Option II:** The $1000.00 fee may be paid in two installments. An initial payment of $500.00 shall be due and payable at time the contract is signed. The remaining balance of $500.00 shall be due and payable in full prior to the scattering of the cremains. The initial $500.00 payment is

nonrefundable. If the person or family elects to cancel the arrangement or otherwise decides not to proceed with the scattering after the initial payment has been made, the $500.00 initial payment shall be forfeited and retained by the Garden of Grace. The remaining $500.00 shall not be due if the scattering does not occur. The church recognizes that families may experience financial hardship at the time of a loved one's passing. It is our desire that financial circumstances alone not prevent a family from being considered for use of the GPC Garden of Grace. When a family is unable to pay the applicable fee due to financial hardship, the Session may, upon request, prayerfully consider the circumstances and approve use of the GPC Garden of Grace without the required fee or with an adjusted fee. Each request shall be considered individually and with compassion, dignity, and care for the family. A portion of the fee will be used for recognition materials, an engraved plaque, and record retention. The remainder of the fee is designated for improvements and the upkeep of the Garden of Grace.

f) Recognition - (f.1) a plaque is mounted on the wall in the Narthex of the church with engraving plates containing the name, date of birth and date of death of each person whose cremains have been scattered in the garden. In addition, a memorial book will be placed in the Narthex containing information about the person. Each family is allotted one double-page per individual for the purpose of providing memorial and remembrance information. Such information may include a photograph of the deceased, not to exceed 8 x 10 inches, an obituary, and/or other appropriate information the family wishes to share in remembrance of the individual. This book is available for public viewing and is maintained by the GEM committee.

(f.2) In addition a memorial plaque shall be maintained and displayed in the Garden of Grace to honor each individual whose remains are scattered there. The plaque shall include each person's name and other appropriate identifying information, serving as a lasting tribute to their life and memory.

(f.3) The Clerk of the Session will also enter the appropriate information (name, date of birth, date of death) in the official church records book.

g) Pastor – The pastor shall have responsibility for and oversight of any memorial service associated with the scattering of the deceased's remains.

h) Upkeep – upkeep on the site itself will be maintained by, or under the direction of, the church's Building and Grounds committee.

i) Other – no pet cremains are allowed, only human cremains. This is NOT considered a cemetery, mausoleum, or crypt.

Revised by GEM committee: 9/29/2026

Session Approval: